

North, South, East and West

An Exercise in Understanding Preferences in Group Work

Similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, this exercise uses a set of preferences which relate not to individual but to group behaviors, helping us to understand how preferences affect our group work.

1. The room is set up with four signs on each wall—North, South, East and West.
2. Participants are invited to go to the "direction" of their choice. No one is only one "direction," but everyone can choose one as their pre-dominant one.
3. Each "direction" answers the four questions on a sheet of newsprint. When complete, they report back to the whole group.
4. Processing can include:
 - Note the distribution among the "directions": what might it mean?
 - What is the best combination for a group to have? Does it matter?
 - How can you avoid being driven crazy by another "direction"?
 - How might you use this exercise with others? Students?

North

*Acting - "Let's do it;"
Likes to act, try things,
plunge in.*

West

*Paying attention to detail
—likes to know the who,
what, when, where and why
before acting.*



East

*Speculating - likes to look
at the big picture and the
possibilities before
acting.*

South

*Caring - likes to know that
everyone's feelings have
been taken into
consideration and that
their voices have been
heard before acting.*

Decide which of the four "directions" most closely describes your personal style. You must choose one direction only. No Northeast! (Northwest, Southeast, etc) Then spend 15 minutes answering the following questions as a group.

1. What are the strengths of your style? (4 adjectives)
2. What are the limitations of your style? (4 adjectives)
3. What style do you find most difficult to work with and why?
4. Explain what the other "directions" need to know about you so that you can work together effectively.

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